

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST  
NR-ELIGIBILITY REVIEW FORM

Property Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Inventory Number: ~~220000~~ CH-976

Address: 9585 Crain Highway, Charles County - in the vicinity of Bel Alton

Owner: Swann, Charles A and Frances M

Tax Parcel Number: 20 Tax Map Number: 64

Project MD 301 Agency State Highway Administration (SHA)

Site visit by SHA Staff: ☒ no ☐ yes Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Eligibility recommended ☐ Eligibility **not** recommended ☒

Criteria ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D Considerations: ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D ☐ E ☐ F ☐ G ☒ None

Is property located within a historic district?: ☒ no ☐ yes Name of District: \_\_\_\_\_

Is district listed?: ☒ no ☐ yes

Documentation on the property/district is presented in: Project Review and Compliance Files

Description of Property and Eligibility Determination (Use continuation sheet if necessary and attach map and photo)

9585 Crain Highway is two stories in height and L-shaped in plan. The wood frame dwelling is covered with a cross gable, standing seam metal roof. The main entrance is marked by a front gable portico supported by turned wood posts. A shed roof porch is located on the interior of the ell, along the recessed section of the main elevation (east). The house is articulated with wide wood trim around the windows and doors, boxed cornices, and wide overhanging eaves.

During the early 19th century, alternative transportation networks developed in Charles County to replace the heavily relied upon rivers and streams that had become less navigable due to silt accumulation. New roads, resulting from the growth of smaller villages and towns as commercial centers, were laid throughout southern Maryland. Steamboat lines along the Patuxent and Potomac Rivers were first established in Charles County in 1815. The transportation of passengers and goods helped to link the southern Maryland countryside more tightly into the state's economy, thus allowing Charles County to thrive as one of Maryland's largest producers of tobacco. Charles County averaged 3.25 million pounds of tobacco per year between 1840 and 1870.

Prepared by EHT Tracerics, Inc.

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST REVIEW

Eligibility recommended ☐

Eligibility **not** recommended ☒

Criteria: ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D Consideration ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D ☐ E ☐ F ☐ G ☐ None

 Reviewer, Office of Preservation Services

10/27/95  
Date

Reviewer, NR Program

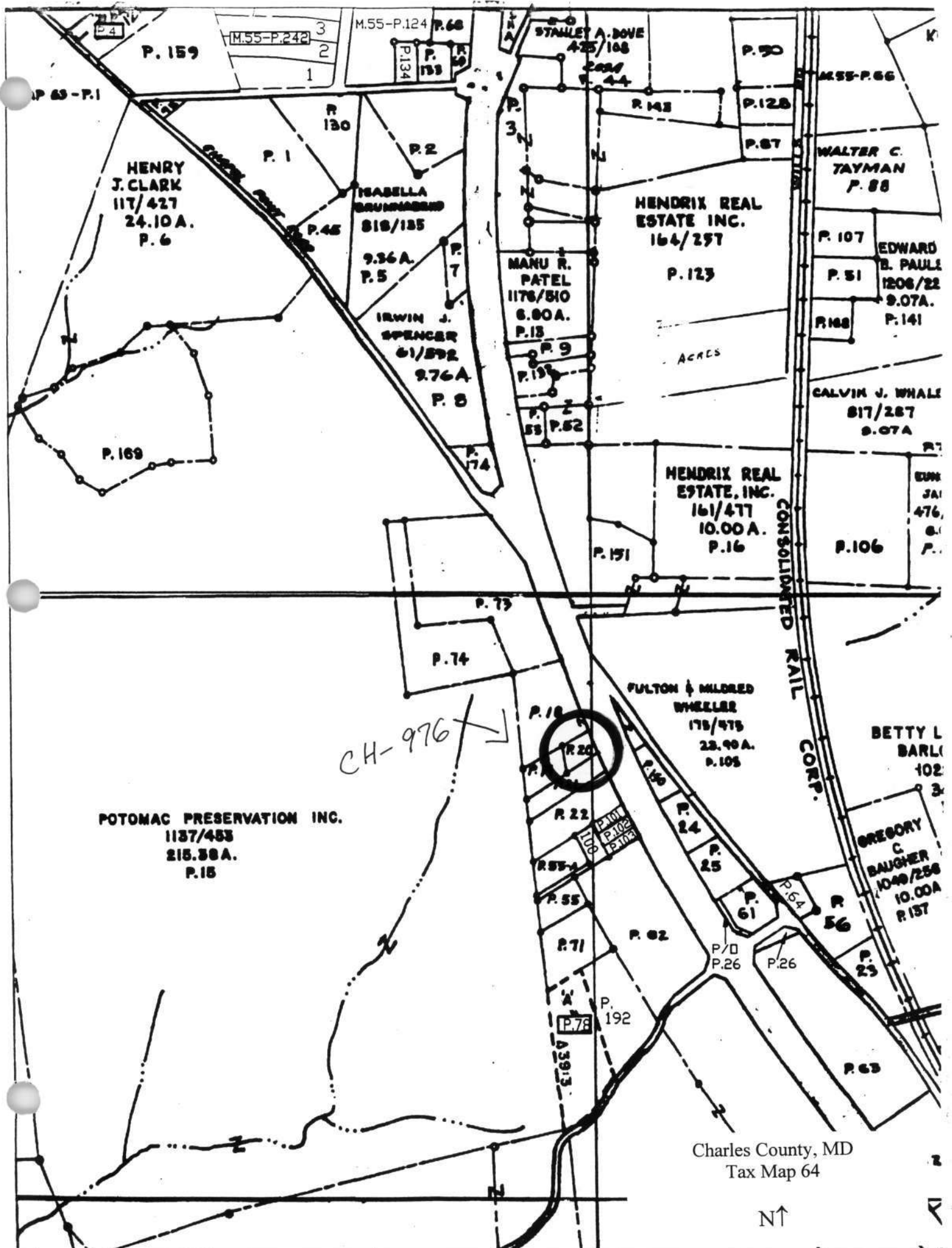
Date

Charles County's late 19th- and early 20th-century history is dominated by industrial and urban development. The greatest impact upon community growth came from the railroad. The completion of the Baltimore and Potomac Railroad's (B&P) mainline from Bowie in Prince George's County to Pope's Creek in Charles County in 1872 prompted local entrepreneurs to establish stores and other commercial facilities near the railroad stations. The B&P Railroad also made inland farms accessible, thus, increasing their value and revitalizing the practice of agriculture in Southern Maryland. La Plata station still stands at the intersection of the rail line with Charles Street.

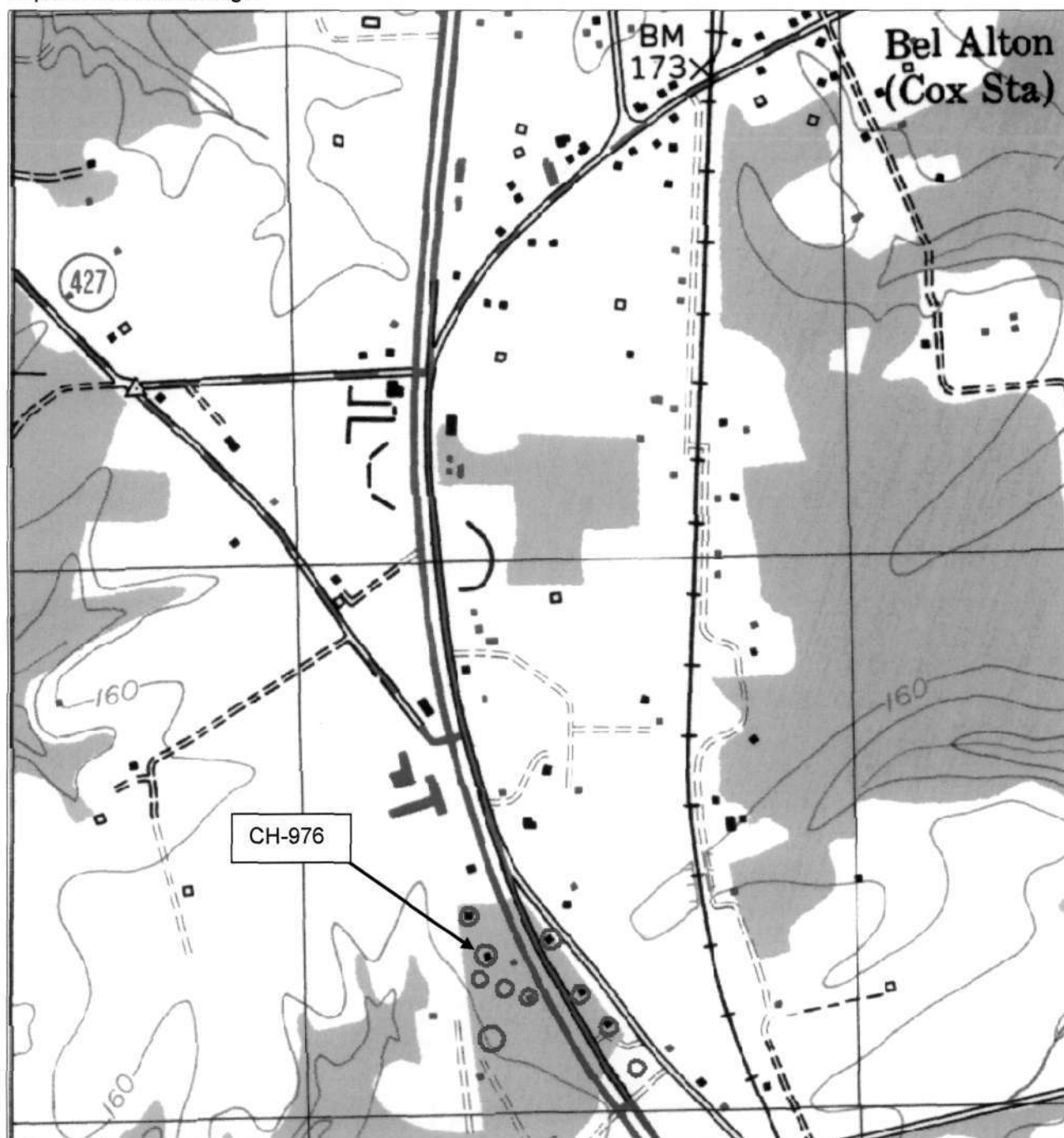
As La Plata grew, Charles County citizens lobbied to have the county seat moved from Port Tobacco to La Plata. La Plata became the county seat of Charles County's government in 1895 and a new courthouse was erected in 1896.

Towards the end of the first quarter of the 20th century, road improvements and developments also contributed to Charles County's community evolution. In particular, the Robert Crain Highway, later expanded as part of U.S. 301, attracted new development to older communities along its corridor. Crain Highway brought commercial development on La Plata's west side and contributed to the Charles County seat's overall growth in the 1920s and 1930s.

Built circa 1860, this vernacular I-house, with slight Queen Anne-style influences, is not eligible for the National Register. While it is an earlier example of the residential development along U.S. 301, this resource lacks significance related to events, persons, or architecture. Criterion D, information potential, was not assessed for this study.



CH-976  
9585 Crain Highway (US 301), Bel Alton  
Pope's Creek Quadrangle





~~10000~~ CH-976

9585 Grain Highway  
Charles County, Md

Traceries

June, 1999

MD SHPO

View of East elevation

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